



Archives ACT Finding Aid Cemeteries

Direct government administration of public cemeteries is a relatively new phenomenon in Australia. Prior to that, public cemeteries were run by trusts with each religion having their own section in a planned or designated area and their own trustees. Where the cemetery was too far away, interments occurred in local burial grounds, such as on sheep and cattle stations, or continued in churchyards.

The Canberra Public Cemeteries Trust was established in 1933 under the Commonwealth Cemeteries Ordinance 1933. However the Trust was superseded by the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority established by the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003*. The principal changes included the setting up of the Cemeteries Authority and a requirement to establish Perpetual Care Trust Funds for the care of the ACT Public Cemeteries into the future. The Trust published annual reports as does the Authority. The website¹ lists burials in the ACT Government cemeteries.

Files containing information on current ACT Government cemeteries are available for Hall², Woden³ and Gungahlin⁴. Hall General Cemetery was gazetted in the New South Wales Government Gazette on 22 March 1883. Woden Cemetery opened in December 1935 and Gungahlin opened in 1979.

Besides cultural value, cemeteries also have natural value. This is especially the case at Hall which is a bush cemetery with known rare plants.⁵

The records of private burial grounds⁶ are available from a variety of sources. These sources include the organisations that run the cemeteries, published lists of burials and monumental inscriptions, collections of material in libraries⁷.

Non-government cemeteries in the ACT are either in:

- churchyards e.g. St John the Baptist's Churchyard at Reid⁸, St Paul's Evatt⁹ or the Methodist Cemetery Weetangera.¹⁰ Weetangera Cemetery was dedicated on 28th

¹ <http://www.canberracemeteries.com.au/>

² Territory and Municipal Services 73/4435 Hall General Cemetery; 83/301 Block 301 Hall District Cemetery Hall; 89/2049 OCM Infrastructure Div Hall Cemetery landscaping

³ National Capital Development Commission 85/1295 Canberra Public Cemetery Woden landscaping; 81/1360 Canberra Public Cemetery Woden 1981 onwards; Housing 21476 (1992) Canberra Cemetery Trust Housing Cottage

⁴ National Capital Development Commission 81/957 Planning for future cemetery requirements in ACT prior to 1988; 72/429 Gungahlin Cemetery Gungahlin 224 Stage 1 Development; 72/1738 Gungahlin Cemetery Stage 2 Burial area; 82/1130 Gungahlin Cemetery Headstone Burial Area Stage 2 development; 79/1190 Gungahlin Cemetery – Landscape improvements stage 1; 70/80 Gungahlin Cemetery – Building works; 85/1270 Gungahlin Cemetery Headstone Burial Area Stage 3

⁵ Territory and Municipal Services 94/8315 Conservation and Wildlife Section *Prasophyllum petilum* Hall Cemetery

⁶ Territory and Municipal Services 71/2892 Private burial grounds – A.C.T.

⁷ The ACT Heritage Library has linked the references in Burkhardt, Geoffrey, *Canberra and district local history: a select bibliography*. Angaston, S. Aust : Magpie Books, 1996 http://www.library.act.gov.au/find/history/frequentlyaskedquestions/Canberra_Bibliography/Churches

November 1872 and was still in use in the 1930s. This cemetery was not acquired by the Commonwealth under the provisions of the Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909;

- stations and properties e.g. Cuppacumbalong¹¹, The Oaks¹², Parkwood, Lambrigg, Lanyon, Duntroon, Naas, Cemetery Paddock Ginninderra; or

- on other private land like Pialligo Reserve, Kowen Forest¹³ and Tharwa¹⁴. Tharwa General Cemetery was gazetted in the New South Wales Government Gazette 16 February 1889. Trustees were appointed for the various denominational portions between 1889 and 1904. It was passed to the Commonwealth under the provisions of the Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909 however it is now not an ACT Government cemetery. The grave at Mount Stromlo of Dr Walter Geoffrey Duffield was included in the now repealed Cemeteries Act 1933 but is now under the care of the Australian National University¹⁵. The graves of Mr William James and Mrs Farrer at Lambrigg are also outside the ACT Government control.

Information on people not buried in cemeteries, such as lone graves and Aboriginal burials is generally to be found in non-government sources. However, where a heritage listing has been made there will be government records.¹⁶

8 Information on St John's is at http://www.stjohnscanberra.org/our_heritage; Salisbury, Jean, St John's Churchyard 1844-1998: the Anglican Church of St John the Baptist Canberra. Canberra : Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra, 2000; <http://www.hagsoc.org.au/main/index.php>;
<http://www.canberrahistory.org.au/>

9 Information on St Paul's is found at <http://www.aussieheritage.com.au/listings/act/Evatt/StPaulsCemetery/2403>

10 Territory and Municipal Services 80/1257 Block 1257 Canberra City District – Weetangera Methodist Cemetery; 80/1752 Recreation & Tourism Branch, Heritage Committee – Weetangera Methodist Cemetery; Cameron, Ernest and Evan. The Story of the Weetangera Methodist Church. Canberra, 1956.

11 Territory and Municipal Services 80/1971 Recreation & Tourism Branch, Heritage Committee - Cuppacumbalong Cemetery (De Salis graves); Claoué-Long, Anne Rural graves in the ACT: a historical context and interpretation

<http://www.act.nationaltrust.org.au/documents/RuralGravesreport.pdf>

12 <http://www.interment.net/data/aus/act/oaks/index.htm>

13 Territory and Municipal Services 87/3655 Arts & Recreation Branch, Colverwell Graves – Kowen Forest – historic sites & building

14 Territory and Municipal Services 93/146 Block 146 Paddys River – Tharwa Cemetery;

http://www.tams.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/13765/248.pdf; and http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;search=place_name%3Dtharwa%3Bkeyword_PD%3Don%3Bkeyword_SS%3Don%3Bkeyword_PH%3Don%3Blatitude_1dir%3DS%3Blongitude_1dir%3DE%3Blongitude_2dir%3DE%3Blatitude_2dir%3DS%3Bin_region%3Dpart;place_id=18213

http://www.tams.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/13765/248.pdf; and http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;search=place_name%3Dtharwa%3Bkeyword_PD%3Don%3Bkeyword_SS%3Don%3Bkeyword_PH%3Don%3Blatitude_1dir%3DS%3Blongitude_1dir%3DE%3Blongitude_2dir%3DE%3Blatitude_2dir%3DS%3Bin_region%3Dpart;place_id=18213

¹⁵ http://heritage.anu.edu.au/Factsheets/Mount_Stromlo_Observatory_Duffields_Grave.htm

¹⁶ <http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/downloads/reports/estquestionsonnotice.pdf> Mr Seselja - Asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage & Indigenous Affairs upon notice on 31 May 2005, Ms Gallagher answered. ACT Heritage Register

http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/heritage/act_heritage_register